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1. An alternative report on climate change was published in March 2008 by the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC) as an antidote to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). This is interesting to Revolt in its challenge to a political-scientific monopoly, as a "second opinion" reminiscent of the Bio-Initiative report on EMF. APPENDIX A has extracts from the Foreword and Preface. For the NIPCC report, see <http://www.sepp.org/publications/NIPCC-Feb%202008.pdf>

2. The charity Children with Leukaemia working with the all-party parliamentary group on EMF has addressed various bills going through parliament. The Housing and Regeneration Bill was debated in the Commons 31 March and six amendments were tabled and discussed by Nick Hurd and the Minister, Iain Wright, who gave a fulsome pledge that he would work closely with stakeholders and MPs on the issue of EMF from powerlines. The debate can be seen live on the link below: <http://www.parliamentlive.tv/Main/VideoPlayer.aspx?meetingId=1516> (Go to the page and then fast forward to 4 hours, 3 minutes into the debate)

3. Home rule for everybody? Thanks to Hans Karow for interesting news from across the Atlantic. US communities last month passed local laws to resist national and corporate threats to their environment. Likewise in Canada, the Supreme Court ruled back in 2001 that communities have the right to protect their citizens even against presumed hazards irrespective of federal regulations. That was in support of local restriction of pesticide use. The idea of local control might more readily apply to phone masts than to powerlines and major infrastructure projects, but the news is timely in relation to the current UK Planning Bill which seeks to increase national control. See APPENDIX B for details and links.

4. From NZZ On-line 15-4-08, forwarded by Krzysztof Kuklinsky: The Valais council in Switzerland, supported by representatives of other affected cantons, has asked the Bundesrat to set clear criteria for burying HV powerlines, taking account of environmental and health concerns. There are fears of pylons up to 90 metres high on the proposed powerline supply line between Chamoson and Mörel. The mayor of Villarepos, Michel Bugnon opposed the powerline project Yverdon-Galmiz in the Freiburg district, saying it would be technically possible to put it underwater in the Neuenburgersee. National Assembly members question claims that costs of burial would be from 3 to 10 times more than overhead lines, saying that on a total cost basis including operating expenses burial is even cheaper for certain voltages, and call for a neutral and independent study. <http://www.nzz.ch/nachrichten/schweiz/>

5. Biofuels have enjoyed rapid development in recent years alongside concerns about unexpected global impacts, not least on land and food prices. Potential environmental advantages of biofuels have been debated, but one principle for sustainability in the UK has been local production within a short distance from field to refinery. That was the principle of the Teesside refinery, yet it is now to close with the loss of 40 jobs after a loss of £46 million last year. Rising costs and cheap imports are blamed and the trend is expected to be widespread in the UK. The owners D1 Oils expect to grow a million hectares of biofuels in Asia and Africa by 2012.

6. Trafford Council, the relevant planning authority, declared 24-4-08 the position of National Grid's pylon near to Dermot Finnigan's home at Sale, Manchester, to be unlawful. The pylon was moved under a Transport Order in connection with a proposed extension of a local railway, but NG put it in a position radically different from that specified. Dermot Finnigan says government department BERR must apply the law and remove the line. BERR has sat on the problem for many months and has yet to say what it will do. For more on the Sale saga see news250-251-255 etc. but note that the unlawfulness issue is distinct from the safety clearance issue before the courts, a "double whammy" if ever there was one.

7. Good news 30-4-08 from France: it has been decided that the 400kV line from France to Spain across the Pyrenees will have 50km underground, which it is claimed will be a world record to date. For more details and a video report (in French) see

http://www.next-up.org/pages/nouvellesdumonde_THT.php#1

8. Health concerns from mobile phone radiation are not Revolt's priority, as they differ from power-frequency fields. But the subjects overlap, with common features including biological complexity, precautionary approaches to uncertain but still substantial evidence, and common review and advisory bodies. As world research develops, it is strengthening concerns. Two new reports are worth noting:

(a) The Russian National Committee on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (<http://www.pole.com.ru/>, chairman Professor Yuri Gregoriev), as recognised by WHO, has 14-4-08 issued an urgent warning especially of risks to children:

<http://www.emfacts.com/weblog/?p=885>

(b) Professor Bruce Armstrong, head of the Australian part of the 13-country WHO Interphone 10-year study, is the latest expert to warn of increased evidence "pointing towards" danger from mobile phones. Further, exposure from phones in pockets used with Bluetooth were shown to exceed existing safety limits. A 10-minute video news report 2-2-05 can be seen at

<http://videos.next-up.org/SevenNews/HealthFearsOverMobilePhones/PrBruceArmstrongInterphoneSAR02052008.html>

9. My summary impressions from the conference on Childhood Leukaemia: Causes and Prevention, held in London 29/30-4-08 are at APPENDIX C. Hot on its heels, ICNIRP has its own conference on childhood leukaemia 5-7 May.

10. EMFs in incubators affect babies' heart rate, reports Dr Carlo Bellieni: "... the effects of these machines are not neutral, and they should be", though no adverse health effects have been identified.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/em/-/1/hi/health/7375050.stm>

APPENDIX A Extracts from NIPCC Report March 2008.

From the Foreword by Frederick Seitz (President Emeritus, Rockefeller University; Past President, National Academy of Sciences; Past President, American Physical Society):

In his speech at the United Nations' climate conference on September 24, 2007, Dr. Vaclav Klaus, president of the Czech Republic, said it would most help the debate on climate change if the current monopoly and one-sidedness of the scientific debate over climate change by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) were eliminated. He reiterated his proposal that the UN organize a parallel panel and publish two competing reports.

The present report of the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC) does exactly that. It is an independent examination of the evidence available in the published, peer-reviewed literature – examined without bias and selectivity. It includes many research papers ignored by the IPCC, plus additional scientific results that became available after the IPCC deadline of May 2006.

The IPCC is pre-programmed to produce reports to support the hypotheses of anthropogenic warming and the control of greenhouse gases, as envisioned in the Global Climate Treaty. The 1990 IPCC Summary completely ignored satellite data, since they showed no warming. The 1995 IPCC report was notorious for the significant alterations made to the text *after* it was approved by the scientists – in order to convey the impression of a human influence. The 2001 IPCC report claimed the twentieth century showed 'unusual warming' based on the now-discredited hockey-stick graph. The latest IPCC report, published in 2007, completely devaluates the climate contributions from changes in solar activity, which are likely to dominate any human influence.

From the Preface by S. Fred Singer (President, Science and Environmental Policy Project; Distinguished Research Professor, George Mason University; Professor Emeritus of Environmental Science, University of Virginia):

Before facing major surgery, wouldn't you want a second opinion?

When a nation faces an important decision that risks its economic future, or perhaps the fate of the ecology, it should do the same. It is a time-honored tradition in science to set up a 'Team B,' which examines the same original evidence but may reach a different conclusion. The Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change

(NIPCC) was set up to examine the same climate data used by the United Nations-sponsored Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

On the most important issue, the IPCC's claim that "most of the observed increase in global average temperatures since the mid-20th century is *very likely* due to the observed increase in anthropogenic greenhouse gas concentrations," (emphasis in the original), NIPCC reaches the opposite conclusion – namely, that natural causes are very likely to be the dominant cause. Note: We do not say anthropogenic greenhouse (GH) gases cannot produce some warming. Our conclusion is that the evidence shows they are not playing a significant role.

...

Why have the IPCC reports been marred by controversy and so frequently contradicted by subsequent research? Certainly its agenda to find evidence of a human role in climate change is a major reason; its organization as a government entity beholden to political agendas is another major reason; and the large professional and financial rewards that go to scientists and bureaucrats who are willing to bend scientific facts to match those agendas is yet a third major reason.

Another reason for the IPCC's unreliability is the naive acceptance by policymakers of 'peer reviewed' literature as necessarily authoritative. It has become the case that refereeing standards for many climate-change papers are inadequate, often because of the use of an 'invisible college' of reviewers of like inclination to a paper's authors. [Wegman et al. 2006] Policy should be set upon a background of demonstrable science, not upon simple (and often mistaken) assertions that, because a paper was refereed, its conclusions must be accepted.

APPENDIX B News from Hans Karow about local laws.

Source:

http://www.precaution.org/lib/08/prn_nh_towns_assert_natures_rights.080324.htm

The Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund, March 21, 2008

TWO N.H. COMMUNITIES ENACT LAWS RECOGNIZING RIGHTS OF NATURE

[Rachel's introduction: Two more towns have passed local laws declaring that nature has rights and corporations don't.]

Two towns in New Hampshire this month passed local laws recognizing the rights of nature and specifically restricting the rights of corporations.

Nottingham, N.H. passed The Nottingham Water Rights and Local Self - Government Ordinance at a town meeting March 15th. The ordinance establishes strict liability for culpable corporations and government entities that permit and facilitate the

privatization and corporatization of water within the town.

The ordinance also strips corporations of constitutional protections within the town. The Town of Nottingham thus becomes the 11th municipality in the nation to refuse to recognize corporate constitutional "rights," and to prohibit corporate rights from being used to override the rights of human and natural communities.

The vote in Nottingham was 175 to 111 for the ordinance.

When a few people at the end of the meeting, attempted to use an obscure local law to recall the vote in seven days, after over 75% of the voters had left, the action was defeated by over 60% of the people remaining. These two significant votes proclaim Democracy is alive and well in Nottingham.

At Town Meeting on the same day in Barnstead, voters amended their Water Rights Ordinance; which was passed almost unanimously at their Town Meeting two years ago; to include the Rights of Nature.

Barnstead, NH , became the 12th municipality in the nation to recognize the Rights of Nature. Barnstead voted overwhelmingly on Saturday, March 15th, to add the Rights of Nature to their ordinance which has been in place since March 2006, when they became the first municipality to deny corporate assumed privileges to corporate entities withdrawing water for resale, within the town.

The [Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund](#) (CELDF) of Chamberburg, Pennsylvania has been spearheading efforts by local communities to assert control over corporations.

Ben Price, Projects Director for the Legal Defense Fund, had this to say, "The people have asserted their right and their duty to protect their families, environment, and future generations. In enacting this law, the community has gone on record as rejecting the legal theory behind Dillon's Rule, which erroneously asserts that there is no inherent right to local self-government. The American Revolution was about nothing less than the fundamental right of the people to be the decision-makers on issues directly affecting the communities in which they live. They understood that a central government, at some distance removed from those affected, acts beyond its authority in empowering a few powerful men -- privileged with chartered immunities and rights superior to the people in the community -- to deny citizens' rights, impose harm, and refuse local self-determination.

"The peoples of the Towns of Nottingham and Barnstead have acted in the best tradition of liberty and freedom, and confronted injustice in the form of a state-permitted corporate assault against the consent of the sovereign people," he said.

CELDF's New Hampshire organizer, Gail Darrell, spoke to the success of the amendments on Monday.

"The People of Barnstead have agreed to acknowledge that the natural world needs an advocate -- that advocate is us. The water which we all share is now protected by all

of us who live here. We have decided that protecting the essence of all life is a good way to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of the community."

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Subject: Precautionary Principle
From: "Michael P. Milburn" 29 Jun 2001

I thought the list would be interested in yesterday's ruling by the Supreme Court of Canada on pesticides. Pesticides like the microwaves from cell phone systems are potentially hazardous. As with microwaves there are uncertainties about the extent of the risk uncertainties that industry has used to reduce regulatory action at the federal level. Of course there are too many cases of federal politicians being influenced more by industry than the citizens that elect them. A Canadian town Hudson just outside of Montreal banned pesticides some 10 years ago. The industry challenged the law in court arguing that local communities can't enact laws more stringent than federal regulations. Sound familiar! The case made it all the way to the Supreme Court. Yesterday the court ruled that communities have the right to protect their citizens even against presumed hazards irrespective of federal regulations. And it specifically upheld the precautionary principle. That's a positive trend in favor of democracy and public health and rare on this continent. Certainly relevant to the city of Toronto's attempt to limit rf/microwave exposure.

See court ruling:
<http://www.mindfully.org/Pesticide/Hudson-Quebec-Bans-Pesticides.htm#sup>

APPENDIX C Summary impressions from Childhood Leukaemia conference.

The charity Children with Leukaemia (CWL) held two 2-day conferences in London last week: one on Causes and Prevention, the other on Molecular Basis. I attended only the first, though it included quite a bit of molecular biology and genetics.

In the spirit of Mel Greaves's concluding remarks, this is not an exhaustive summary but a few lasting impressions.

1. Overview on causes (and their advocates).

In his opening talk, Mel Greaves himself stressed that there was clearly no single major cause for childhood leukaemia and nor would any emerge in future. This should be obvious from the range of evidence in the context of complex multi-factorial biological systems with multiple effects.

Perhaps it needed to be said because of the human tendency of researchers to champion their "cause" while denigrating others, with exaggerated media reporting an exacerbating factor. Certainly this tendency was evident at the conference at times, and not just for or against EMFs, but with promoting or dismissive attitudes to infection, diet, birth-weight, air pollution, light-at-night etc. as potential factors.

The human and social analysis of researchers and funding and advisory bodies might be as fascinating as the underlying science itself. That's not just a flippant remark, as there may be generic structures at work, as indicated for example in the Wegman report (news239 etc.) on climate change research.

2. Scientific progress and precision of knowledge.

As far as potential causal factors are concerned, the position has not changed much since the last CWL conference four years ago, save to reinforce their multiplicity and uncertainty. However, the complex world of genetic analysis is opening up at a great rate. I suspect that equipment (both the physical sampling and the computer analysis of large data sets) will drive future knowledge, but at this stage that doesn't seem to be too restrictive.

Mel Greaves called for complete mechanistic explanations. He wanted to know exactly how proposed mechanisms would work. That may be a tall order in such complex systems with inhibiting and counter-inhibiting processes. A worthy goal of course, but meanwhile (and to some extent forever) there is the policy problem of how to respond to uncertainty. One quote sticks in the mind from my early management training: any fool can manage given all the information; what counts is how you manage without it.

3. Two observations: East Germany and Hong Kong.

It was in a side comment that Mel Greaves mentioned two striking observations about the incidence of childhood leukaemia: it rose dramatically in East Germany after the old communist system of communal baby care was abandoned, and something similar happened in Hong Kong following social responses to avian flu.

Strong observations particularly impress me, as a mathematician, compared with theoretical speculation. While other factors might be at play, e.g. extent and timing of recording of disease in changing political contexts, not just the hypothesised population mixing and deferred infection effects, these observations surely call for thorough investigation.

4. Selection bias explanation for EMF "effects"?

Joachim Schuz gave a nice overview of epidemiology for EMFs and childhood leukaemia based largely on his review article in Health Physics June 2007. Selection bias can arise in case-control studies when "families with lower social status are particularly under-represented among controls" as a result of participation bias. This can then lead to the controls being biased towards lower EMF exposure, and hence to a false positive association.

Schuz had used a simulation to estimate the size of this selection bias, finding that, from his German data, it might account for 66% of the observed increased risk. There are of course many uncertainties, and opposing effects such as strong exposure misclassification uncertainties likely to bias towards the null, but it is important to keep this reasonable potential selection bias in mind. If real, it should apply to many case-control studies apart from those involving EMF, by way of biasing the socio-

economic status of the controls; this ought to be well researched in epidemiology more generally (I will have to check).

Such a strong capability for selection bias might also be thought to apply to associations between EMF exposure and other diseases. However they are sometimes a mixture of case-control and cohort studies, with similar findings in each, which would not support large-scale explanation by selection bias. In particular, the meta-analyses by Garcia et al. 2008 (news250) show significant associations of ELF-EMF exposure with Alzheimer's disease by case-control (OR = 2.03) and by cohort studies (RR = 1.62). Given that OR approximates RR for low-incidence diseases, this might be commensurate with 20% explanation of the case-control finding by selection bias, but that would be highly speculative.

In parallel, the thorough analysis by Greenland 2005 should also be kept in mind. As reported in the WHO EHC238 assessment of 2007, based on one set of plausible assumptions, Greenland calculates posterior probabilities of 2–4% that the combination of misclassification, selection bias, confounding and random error (i.e. the net impact) explains the association.

5. Is it a joke?

The conference seemed a bit bemused when Mel Greaves picked out an incidental point from Denis Henshaw's talk, namely the mention of depression among outcomes linked with exposure to EMFs and powerlines. Mel asked, apparently genuinely, if it was a joke. Perhaps he was thinking about being depressed (in the casual rather than clinical sense) by the presence of powerlines, and perhaps he was not aware of the peer-reviewed literature.

It may be understandable that people would look askance at suggested associations with depression, since it would appear so subjective and hard to measure. It's nice if we can joke about it, for, as some will know, it can be grim enough as well as fatal to the sufferer (by suicide) and even to bystanders. Indeed there are associations with suicide too, which are at least more obviously measurable. Though these findings of weak associations with depression and suicide are unexplained, Denis was observing that there is a potential common thread with several diseases involving melatonin disruption.

Interestingly in the above connections, recent news reports some evidence of association between depression and Alzheimer's disease (e.g. Geerlings et al, *Neurology* 70, 1258-1264, April 2008; <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/7334298.stm>).

6. Observed genotoxic effects of ELF-EMF.

Rob Mairs from Glasgow University described completely new results showing laboratory findings of genotoxicity of ELF-EMF exposure in human glioma cells. In contrast to previous work on large chromosomal aberrations, Rob has used a more sensitive method involving microsatellite DNA sequences. The exposure levels were from 0.1 to 1 mT, much higher than typical environmental exposures, but comparable

with ICNIRP guidance levels, so this opens up a new line of inquiry needing replication and examination at lower levels.

Further, bystander effects were reported, that is exposed cells send signals to neighbour cells and to the surrounding fluid, much like established causes of cancer. These new findings point to previously unknown mechanisms and, in the author's words, suggest a possible mechanism for EMF carcinogenesis involving transport of toxins to sites of infection or tumour localisation.
